"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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ABDALLAH'S DESCENT TO AL JAHRIN.

A TURKISH TALE.

BY GOODWYN BARMBY.

Two days after the close of the Fast of Ramadan, which had fallen that year during a very hot season, Abdallah, the son of Selim, sat upon his mat without his door smoking the herb of meditation, whose fragrant fume wreathed around his majestic beard, and ascended like a cloud above his green turban, for he was a descendant of the Prophet. One by one a group of friends spread their mats, and sat down beside him; for the front of his bazaar was shaded from the heat of the sun; and the salaam being given and returned, and the gestures of salutation made, for awhile they smoked their pipes in silence. Every now and then his friends, however, cast their small dark quick eyes upon the countenance of Abdallah, and noted that his lips were white and his eyes were dark around, and the deep lines of unquiet thought were cut upon his brow.

"Son of Selim!" at length spoke Mustapha the wealthy, "why is thy countenance clouded and on what mat of sorrow dost thou sit? Allah is merciful thou shouldst tell thy friends; for has not our Lord Muhummed said, 'Whosoever treats his guests well is gladdened by them and rejoices their heart?'"

"Tell us, O Abdallah!" said Sidi Kaled the passionate, "what it is that troubles thee."

Then Abdallah removed the tube from his mouth, and between whiles he smoked and spake; and his eye was troubled, as his voice arose from his chest.

"Allah is the greatest," said the son of Selim. "Know, O Friends! that I have seen Al Jahrin."

"How! Art thou a hadgi, then?" exclaimed Hamil the saint.

"Didst thou pass thither," said Hamid the doubter, looking grave, and stroking his white beard, which was long and pointed; "on horseback or on foot, or, peradventure, riding upon a camel?"

"Allah knows," replied the son of Selim, "but it was night when I spread my mat upon the house-top, and the stars were shining brightly; yet was it dark when I descended to Al Jahrin, so that one could not pick the white thread from the black skein. And down I went—down, down—in the thick darkness; down, down, into the black dread. Allah, be merciful unto me."

A moment he stayed, as if exhausted by his feelings, and impressed by his manner, even Hamil the saint, and Hamid the doubter, were silent; then puffed his pipe and continued:

"Down I went—down, down—in the thick darkness—down, down, into the black dread—and my head whirled, and I had no power and no will; and through the clouds beneath, and through the waters beneath — down, down; and through the hail and through the thunder and lightning—down, down; and with brain of creeping fire, and body numb and stiff—down, down—till at length there was, close beneath me, a gloomy light—a light of fiery vapour, a light as lurid as hadgis see above the places of tombs; and lo! in a moment I was in Al Jahrin."

"What, wert thou really in the place of the punishment of idolaters — in Muhummed's sixth hell?"—said Hamid.

"As Allah knows, I was," replied the son of Selim.

"Blasphemy!" muttered Hamil, inaudibly, between his teeth.

"He dream'd," thought Hamid, to himself.

"Go on, O Abdallah! with the history," said Ghaziel, the youngest of the group, and who had not before spoken, "what account canst thou give us of Al Jahrin?"

"For awhile my sight was blanched and I could distinguish little," continued the son of Selim. "Then, through the lurid flames, I could see ghastly faces of human creatures, and around them, as if they formed a wall to shut them in, huge objects compactly ranked together, mingled forms of blended beast and bird, and mixed man and animal; vast shapeless rocks of granite and marble; wide, stupendous foreheads, looming, frowning through the lit-up gloom; vast, deep-set, cold, unchanging stony eyes, and above them, in the dim distance, a stained parapet scarcely distinguishable; and, over all, a high volcanic mountain, belching forth streams of molten gold, while, in the midst of Al Jahrin itself, stood an image of alabaster, the face of which now looked like my own countenance, now like those of the others around it."

Abdallah gasped for breath.

"God is great, and his creations are wonderful," said Ghaziel.

"And the great mountain poured forth molten gold!" exclaimed Mustapha the wealthy.

"Even so," replied Abdallah; "and it burned the tongues of those in Al Jahrin, who continually were mistaking it for living water."

"And didst thou speak to those in Al Jahrin?" asked Sidi Kaled.

"Yea," said Abdallah. "And the first whom I addressed, replied: 'I am of Beni Ismail, the first who worshipped stones, and when we fled from the neighbourhood of Mecca we carried away some of the stones thereof, and we bowed before them in remembrance of the dead, whom we had left behind us, and forget to serve ourselves the one True Living God! And I looked, and lo! he bore behind his back an immense block of black stone, which grievously weighed him down.'"

"Allah, confound the infidels," said Ghaziel; "and didst thou speak to another?"

"The second whom I addressed," continued Abdallah, "said: 'I am of Beni Hanifa, and our idol was made of paste which we worshipped, for we knew the good of food, yet, in a time of famine, we did eat our God, for had we not heard that others eat theirs, and do it even unto this day in the West, and here we ever hunger — we hunger ever.'"

"And so the glutton is ever an idolater," said Sidi Kaled.

"He worships his own belly, O fool!" exclaimed saint Hamil, turning up his eyes to heaven.

"And the next thou spoke with?"

"He said he was an Arabian of the times of ignorance, before the coming of our Lord Mahummed," continued Abdallah, "and that he had worshipped three hundred and sixty idols of the days of the year, but now, although his idols are always before him, he every day suffers pain."

"Alas!" exclaimed Ghaziel, "has not the Prophet said: 'All those who worship idols besides God, whether they be righteous or sinful, will be cast forthwith into everlasting fire.'"

"Whom saw you next?" asked Mustapha.

"Then passed me," continued Abdallah, "those two men of Mecca—before it received the Prophet—Aomar and Ben Yahia Aboukeudäa, by name, and they cried as they passed by, with loud lamenting voices, 'Woe is us! woe is us! that we went unto Assyria and seeing the inhabitants worshipping idols whom they pretended gave them rain, said unto them, Give us one of your gods, for of all countries ours wants rain most. And they made us a present of Habal, that man-idol of red stone, which we placed in the centre of the Caaba, and in the days of drought fell down and worshipped. Woe is us, for we have now no rain to quench our burning tongues!'"

"Son of Selim," said Hamid, "surely all this was in a dream: thy mind has been disturbed by thy fasting."

"Far be it from Allah so to serve his slave," replied Abdallah. "Did I not

say at close of Ramadan, 'My God, I have fasted to obey thee, and I break my fast in eating thy good things. Pardon my past and future sins;' and Allah the most merciful is the hearer of prayer."

"Yet Allah has revealed his truths to his servants by dreams and visions," said Ghaziel, "and of such even was the night journey of my Lord Mahummed, as the doctors expound."

"But Abdallah is no hadgi," interpellated the saintly Hamil.

"Let him go on with his recital," cried Sidi Kaled, impatiently.

"The next who passed me," continued Abdallah, "was one who had worshipped the carven idols of Assafan and Naylat, whereof one represented a man, and the other a woman."

"O fools!" cried Hamil, "to worship the works of human hands."

"Yea, more," said Abdallah, "there were those there who worshipped their own organs, and gave themselves up to lusts accordingly; and now, while yet enflamed they suffer ungratified."

"Alas!" sighed Ghaziel.

And Abdallah went on saying that there were those in Al Jahrin, some with swart Coptic faces, some with the eyes of Chaldeans, turned upwards; even Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Indians, some of whom had worshipped the stars, falsely thinking them to be gods, because they had discovered that they had influenced the seasons; and others of whom had not only worshipped the sculptured forms of beasts, and birds, and plants themselves, such as the hawk, the lion, and the lotos, but had also bowed themselves down before living animals and vegetables, worshipping the leek, the cow, and the ibis.

Abdallah's friends uttered many pious ejaculations during this recital; and when, in continuation, he described to them the Greek and Roman pagans who were confined in Al Jahrin for having worshipped statues of strength and beauty, and for having made demi-gods of the ancient great among them; and the disciples of Zoroaster, the Magians, who were there for having adored fire, forgetful that Allah was the author and controller of Fire, their expressions of astonishment were increased.

After giving time for these ejaculations, he went on, saying:

"Next I beheld a group of idolaters, who, looking with abhorrence upon the others who were confined with them in Al Jahrin, kept somewhat together in a particular part thereof. These were they among those called Christians, who worshipped Jesus the Son of Mary as a God, or as a person or part of God: and others were with them, standing a little on one side, and looking evil upon the rest, as they looked upon them who worshipped not only Jesus but also Mary his mother. And their punishment was thus two-fold in being grouped with each other, and in being placed generally with those who were punished for idolatry, their errors in which they now saw."

Amid expressions of horror at this,—"There is but one God, and Muhummed is his Prophet," exclaimed Ghaziel

Then they all joined, reciting in a low voice, the *Lebda.*

"Lord! Lord! thou hast no equal! Lord! Lord! mercies, favours, and commandments belong unto Thee! Thou hast no associate!"

Having each also uplifted one finger in token of the Unity of God, Abdallah continued:

"And the next I saw were Musselmen."

"What?" exclaimed Hamid.

"He blasphemes," muttered Hamil. Then audibly—"Now we know that thou art in error."

"Allah is my witness!" replied the son of Selim.

"Dost thou say then," said Hamil, "that Allah hast not revealed to my Lord Muhummed that the wicked among the faithful shall be placed in Gehenna, while for Jews and Christians are reserved viler places of punishment, even Padha and Al Hotamah."

"Nay," replied Abdallah, "Allah be merciful unto me! But as Allah is my witness, I both saw and spoke with Moslem in Al Jahrin."

"Impossible! Thou art beside thyself! Thou slanderest the word of the Prophet! Thou departest from the word of the Book! Thou art a son of the Tanzimat! O, ye faithful, beware of the words of his lips," exclaimed Hamil, with indignation.

"What said the Moslem to thee, whom thou sayest thou saw in Al Jahrin?" inquired Sidi Kaled.

Abdallah, for a moment, gasped for breath.

"They tore their long beards," said the son of Selim, "and spake unto me with tears in their eyes, saying. 'Well wonderest thou, O Abdallah! at seeing Moslem in Al Jahrin; but we also were idolaters.'"

"O false tongue that thou art," exclaimed Sidi Kaled, "I will hear thee no longer. Thou liest, or art beside thyself;" and his passion overcoming his previous impatience to arrive at the end of the story, he rose up and departed hastily.

"Thou falsifiest the faith and art worse than a gaiour," muttered Hamil, the Hadgi, most savagely, and he also gathered his robes about him and went off straight towards the college of the Ulemahs, there to inform against the son of Selim as an apostate and heretic.

But the rest remained, even Mustapha the wealthy, and Hamid the doubter, and Ghaziel the young man. And Abdallah's head was bent unto the ground, and for awhile they sat in silence.

At length spoke Ghaziel, and said: "O Abdallah! we wonder at that thou tellest, but we would yet hear more, that we may rightly understand the matter. Did the Moslem, whom thou sayest thou saw in Al Jahrin (Allah, be merciful unto thee!), say aught else unto thee?"

"As thy soul liveth, Ghaziel Ben Abou, what I have told I have told truly, and I have yet more to tell," replied the son of Selim.

"Say on then!" said Hamid.

"One of the Moslem in Al Jahrin," continued Abdallah, "thus spake unto me: 'Know, O Abdallah (said he), that though thrice a day I repeated the *Lebda*, yet was I an idolater, for I worshipped gold and loved it more than Allah, and preferred rubies to wisdom, and made of my sequins idols, and bowed myself down to them rather than to God, and thus am I here punished.'"

"What!" exclaimed Mustapha, angrily. "Dost thou say, that because I am wealthy, I dishonour God and am meet for Al Jahrin? Even I, who am a Moslem, unto whom our Holy Prophet has promised treasure in this world, and in Paradise plains of pearls and gardens of rubies. Out with thy foolish tongue, for thou slanderest the goodness of Allah!"

"I said not aught of thee, O worthy Mustapha," replied Abdallah, humbly, "nor aught of myself, and I pray, Allah, that through his Holy Prophet he may ever increase thy riches and thy stores."

But Mustapha would not be appeased, but rose up and went on his way.

Then said Abdallah, sorrowfully, "Allah be merciful unto me, for in telling his truth I offend my friends!"

"Continue thy tale," said Ghaziel, "and thou shalt not offend us. Speak I not true words, O Hamid?"

"Yea," replied Hamid, "for to me he but relateth his dreams, and dreams are but as wind which blows upon the cheek, and then passes away. Continue, O Abdallah!"

"Another Moslem," continued Abdallah, spake unto me, and said: "know that though I obeyed the ordinances of the Prophet, and truly apportioned the dowries that he commands, and had but three wives and few concubines, and kept the couch and chamber holy; that too much I sought the pillow of breasts, and the sleep of sweetness, and forgot in the arms of Haydèe the works of a Moslem, and made an idol of her body, in despite of the spirit of Allah! And thus am I, too, in Al Jahrin."

Ghaziel sighed.

"And yet a third Moslem," continued Abdallah, spake unto me, and said: "Know that, though I was outwardly a Moslem, and infringed not the holy law of the Prophet, yet did I exalt my mind above many things that were written, and without endeavouring with patience and with travail to understand them rightly, did prefer my own thoughts to those therein contained, and thus I worshipped myself instead of Allah; and so am I, also, in Al Jahrin."

Hamid smiled.

"And didst thou hear aught else, O son of Selim?" asked Ghaziel.

"Naught else," replied Abdallah, "from the lips of those who were Moslem, and what else I heard it would take long to tell; but before I was raised

from Al Jahrin — raised I wot not how—Allah be merciful unto me!—I saw a sight, and I heard a voice, and that voice yet rings within my ears."

"What sight?" asked Hamid.

"What voice?" asked Ghaziel.

"I beheld, and lo! the alabaster statue, of which I told you as being in the midst of Al Jahrin," said Abdallah, "did turn round as of itself, and as it turned it reflected, one by one, the countenances of those who were around it: and, Allah, be merciful unto me! mine also, and our faces, were reflected in its countenance, as though ourselves were idol images. And suddenly there came a voice from above, sounding forth as from a trumpet, and saying, 'The word of the Lord is this—They who in any wise love self more than Allah, such are idolaters!' And at the sound of that trumpet voice we fell into the earth, and the huge walls of images and idol forms, uncouth and vast, shook and quaked, and the gold mountain trembled and groaned from its foundations, and all Al Jahrin itself heaved and opened, and was stretched out. And lo! I was raised—up! up! up! up! Allah be praised: Allah be merciful!"

"Was it not a dream?" said Hamid.

"As Allah liveth, tellest thou us true?" asked Ghaziel.

"As Allah liveth, I have told you truly," said Abdallah Ben Selim, him who descended to Al Jahrin.

Masshaf, Bismillah! Ol, al-kisch!

THE YOUNG MOTHER'S DEATH.

I have been to a funeral to-day. It was in a church;—I had to pass through a garden to reach it;—the warm rain was dropping gently on the shrubs and early flowers, and inside, warm tears were falling; for before the church lay a coffin, and in it was a fair young wife and mother, pale and sweet as the white flowers that lay upon the coffin-lid. Near it was her husband, and beside him were her aged parents, bowed down with grief that she who they thought would close their fading eyes should fade first.

In a house opposite the church were the dead mother's babe, only a few days old, and two other little ones, just old enough to prattle unconsciously, as they went from room to room, "Mamma has gone away." I knew, though they did not, how day after day would pass, and these little girls, who had always seen mamma *come back again*, after she had "gone away," would stand at the window, looking this way and that, with their bright faces, and listening for her light footstep, and my heart ached and my eyes filled as I thought how, every day as they grew older, they would need her care, and feel her loss the more; for it is only in part that a father, even the kindest, can fill a watchful mother's place;—he, whose business must be out of doors and away, how can he know how weary the little hands,—putting down one thing, and taking up another, with no mamma to nod smilingly, and say, "I see"—or "it is very pretty, dear;" how home-sick the little rifled heart feels, though it scarce knows why; how tasteless the little cup of milk mamma used to hold to the rosy lips; how empty parlour and nursery, chamber and hall.

How much less gentle is nurse's touch than hers, how much sooner she wearies of answering little questions; and getting bits of string and toys for restless fingers to play with; how much longer seems the time now, before papa comes home to dinner and tea—poor papa—who with an iron hand crushes down his own sorrow, and tries and fails to speak to them in *her* soft, sweet, winning way; and tries and fails to soothe their little infant griefs, though he would die to save them a heart-pang.

All this I thought of as I looked at these two little curly-headed girls and their baby sister; and I said to myself, I do not know why God took away their young mother, whose work seemed just begun, and left the aged grand-parents who were waiting to go. Why he made that house desolate and silent, once so musical? Why he turned those tender lambs out from that soft, warm fold? With all my thinking I could not find that out; but I am just as sure as if I could that he did it in love, not in anger; I am just as sure as if I were in Heaven this minute that it was best and right; though they, and you, and I, must wait till we get there to know how and why.

—*Fanny Fern.*

DIED POOR.

"It was a sad funeral to me," said the speaker, "the saddest I have attended for years."

"That of Edmondson?"

"Yes."

"How did he die?"

"Poor, poor as poverty—his life was one long struggle with the world, and at every disadvantage. Fortune mocked him all the while with gilded promises that were destined never to know fulfilment."

"Yet he was patient and enduring," remarked one of the company.

"Patient as a Christian—enduring as a martyr," was the answer. "Poor man! He was worthy of a better fate. He ought to have succeeded, for he deserved success."

"Did he not succeed?" questioned the one who had spoken of his perseverance and endurance.

"No, sir, he died poor, as I have just said. Nothing that he put his hand to ever succeeded. A strange fatality seemed to attend every enterprise."

"I was with him in his last moments," said the other, "and thought he died rich."

"No, he left nothing behind," was replied.

"The heirs will have no concern as to the administration of the estate."

"He left a good name," said one, "and that is something."

"And a legacy of noble deeds that were done to humanity," remarked another.

"And precious examples," said another.

"Lessons of patience in sufferings; of hope in adversity; of heavenly confidence when no sunbeams fell upon his bewildering path," was the testimony of another.

"And high trust, manly courage, heroic fortitude."

"Then he died rich!" was the emphatic declaration: "richer than the *millionaire* who went to his long home the same day, a miserable pauper in all but gold. A sad funeral, did you say? No, my friend, it was rather a triumphal procession! Not the burial of a human clod, but the ceremonial attendant on the translation of an angel. Did not succeed! While his whole life was a series of successes. In every conflict he came off the victor, and now the victor's crown is on his brow. Any grasping, soulless, selfish man, with a share of brains, may gather in money, and learn the art of keeping it; but not one in a hundred can bravely conquer in the battle of life as Edmondson has conquered, and step forth from the ranks of man a Christian hero. No, no; he did not die poor but rich—rich in the celestial affections. And his heirs have an interest in the administration of the estate. A large property has been left, and let them see to it that they do not lose the precious things through false estimates and ignorant depreciations."

WILL CHRIST SUCCEED?

Will he take away the sin of the world? Will he draw all men unto himself? Will he thus finish the work which the Father gave him to do?

For reasons to be submitted, we answer, He will.

These reasons are both *negative* and *positive*, and we submit them under their appropriate designation. And

I.—NEGATIVE REASONS.

1.—If he fails, then the purpose of God in sending him into the world must fail also—a supposition which involves the divine goverment in everlasting dishonour!

2.—The promises of God which point to his ultimate triumphs over sin and death, and to the reconciliation of all intelligences to the Father, through the blood of his cross, can never be fulfilled. Compare Rom. v. 20, 21; Col. i. 19, 20; Eph. i. 9, 10.

3.—God could never have attempted the salvation of the world through Christ, if he had not determined upon this result—surely not, if (as Baptists, Congregationalists, and other Calvinistic sects teach) "*from all eternity he fore-ordained some men and angels to everlasting death*, and fixed their number so certain *and so definite that it can neither be increased nor diminished.*"

II.—AFFIRMATIVE REASONS.

We believe that Christ will accom-

plish the object of his mission. 1.—Because it is expressly declared of him that "*he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.*" Isa. liii. 11.

2.—Because all intelligences were given him (see Ps. ii. 8; John iii. 35; xvii. 2), and because he teaches unequivocally, that in the *last day* "all that were given him shall come to him," and adds, "he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37.

3.—Because he promised this result: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me.*"

4.—Because we have the assurance that he must reign until he hath subdued all things unto himself—till the last enemy, death, is destroyed—and then he shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, *that God may be all.*" 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

Should it be affirmed that men die sinners, and enter upon a future life in a state of rebellion to the divine government, not having been saved by Christ here, and therefore that our conclusions are false to the testimonies adduced, we reply that the objection is of no force. If sin reigns in a future state, then will grace reign there more abundantly. See Rom. v. 50, 21. And as sin has reigned unto death, even so *grace shall reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

If, in a future life, sin is punished like all the chastisements of our heavenly Father, that punishment will tend to our "profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." And as all judgment was committed to the Son, it will surely be his prerogative to employ judgment as well as mercy in subduing all things unto himself. Whatever means he employs for the accomplishment of a result so glorious, we shall gratefully ascribe our salvation to him, and not to the means. Death does not save us. Punishment does not save us. The former may bring us nearer to Jesus, and the latter may "yield us the peaceable fruits of righteousness;" but all the glory of our salvation must be ascribed to Him who loved us and died for us—died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

Reader, search the Scriptures daily, and see whether these things are not so.

LED BUT NOT DRIVEN.

A MOTHER, sitting at her work in her parlour, overheard her child, whom an older sister was dressing in an adjoining bed-room, say repeatedly, as if in answer to his sister, "No, I don't want to say my prayers."

"How many believers in good standing," thought the mother to herself, "often say the same thing in heart, though they conceal, even from themselves, the feeling."

"Mother," said the child, appearing a minute or two after, at the parlour door. The tone and look implied that it was only his morning salutation.

"Good morning, my child."

"I am going out to my breakfast."

"Stop a minute; I want you to come here and see me first."

The mother laid her work down in the next chair, as the boy ran toward her. She took him up. He kneeled in her lap, and laid his face down upon her shoulder, his cheek against her ear. The mother rocked her chair slowly backward and forward.

"Are you pretty well this morning?" said she, in a kind, gentle tone.

"Yes, mother, I am very well."

"I am very glad you are well. I am very well, too, and when I woke up this morning, and found that I was well, I thanked God for taking care of me."

"Did you?" said the boy, in a low tone, half a whisper. He paused after it—conscience was at work.

"Did you ever feel my pulse?" asked his mother, after a minute of silence, at the same time taking the boy down, and setting him in her lap, and placing his fingers on her wrist.

"No, but I have felt mine."

"Well, don't you feel mine now? how it goes beating?"

"Yes," said the child.

"If it should stop beating, I should die at once."

"Should you?"

"Yes, and I cannot keep it beating."

"Who can?"

A silent pause.

"You have a pulse, too, which beats in your bosom here, and in your arms, and all over you, and I cannot keep it

beating, nor can you. Nobody can, but God. If he should not take care of you, who could?"

"I don't know, mother," said the child, with a look of anxiety—and another pause ensued.

"So when I woke up this morning, I thought I would ask God to take care of me. I hope He will take care of me, and all the rest of us."

"Did you ask him to take care of *me?*"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I thought you would ask Him yourself. God likes to have us all ask for ourselves."

A long pause ensued. The deeply thoughtful, and almost anxious expression of countenance, showed that the heart was reached.

"Don't you think you had better ask for yourself?"

"Yes," said the boy, readily.

He kneeled again in his mother's lap, and uttered, in his own simple, broken language, a prayer for the protection and blessing of Heaven.

Suppose another case. Another mother, overhearing the same words, calls the child into the room.

"Did I not hear you say you did not want to say your prayers?"

The boy is silent.

"Yes, he did," says his sister, behind him.

"Well, that is very naughty. You ought always to say your prayers. Go right back, now, and say them, like a good boy, and never let me hear of your refusing again."

The boy goes back pouting, and utters the words of prayer, while his heart is full of mortified pride, vexation, and ill will.—*Mother's Magazine.*

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE FUNERAL SERMON, Preached at Newcastle-on-Tyne, by the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., on the occasion of the Death of the Late Rev. G. Harris. To which is prefixed the Address at the Interment.—6*d.*

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The above may be had of Whitfield, 178, Strand, London.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST: a Tract for the Times. 3*s.* per hundred.—Address, Rev. J. H. Ryland, Bradford.

PROBABLE GROUNDS OF CHRISTIAN UNION: Lecture by the Rev. T. L. Harris.—Johnson and Rawson, Manchester.

THE DYING HEBREW'S PRAYER.

ANONYMOUS.

A Hebrew knelt in the dying light:
His eye was dim and cold,
The hairs on his brow were silver white,
And his blood was thin and old!
He lifted his looks to his latest sun,
For he knew that his pilgrimage was done;
And as he saw God's *shadow* there,
His spirit poured itself in prayer.

"I come unto death's second birth,
Beneath a stranger air,
A pilgrim on a dull, cold earth,
As all my fathers were!
And men have stamped me with a curse,—
I feel it is not *Thine;*
Thy mercy, like yon sun, was made
On me—as them—to shine;
And therefore dare I lift mine eye,
Through that, to Thee, before I die.

"In this great temple, built by Thee,
Whose altars are divine,
Beneath yon lamp that ceaselessly
Lights up thine own true shrine,
O take my latest sacrifice!
Look down, and make this sod
Holy as that were, long ago,
The Hebrew met his God!

"I have not caused the widow's tears,
Nor dimmed the orphan's eye,
I have not stained the virgin's years,
Nor mocked the mourner's cry:
The songs of Zion in mine ear
Have ever been most sweet,
And always, when I felt Thee near,
My 'shoes' were 'off my feet'!

"I have known Thee in the whirlwind,
I have known Thee on the hill,
I have loved Thee in the voice of birds,
Or the music of the rill!
I dreamt Thee in the shadow,
I saw Thee in the light,
I heard thee in the thunder-peal,
And worshipped in the night!
All beauty, while it spoke of Thee,
Still made my soul rejoice,
And my spirit bowed within itself,
To hear thy 'still, small voice'!
I have not felt myself a thing
Far from thy presence driven,
By flaming sword or waving wing
Shut out from Thee and heaven!

"Must I the whirlwind reap, because
My father sowed the storm?
Or shrink—because *another* sinned—
Beneath Thy red right arm?
O, much of this we daily scan,
And much is all unknown;

But I will not take my curse from *man*,
I turn to Thee alone!
O, bid my fainting spirit live,
And what is dark reveal,
And what is evil, O forgive!
And what is broken heal;
And cleanse my nature, from above,
In the deep Jordan of thy love.

"I know not if the Christian's heaven
Shall be the same as mine;
I only ask to be forgiven,
And taken home to thine!
I wander on a far, dim strand,
Whose mansions are as tombs,
And long to find the fatherland,
Where there are many homes!—
O, grant, of all yon starry thrones,
Some dim and distant star,
Where Judah's lost and scattered sons
May love Thee from afar!
Where all earth's myriad harps shall meet
In choral praise and prayer,
Shall Zion's harps—of old so sweet—
Alone be wanting there?
Yet place me in thy lower seat,
Though I—as now—be, there,
The Christian's scorn, the Christian's jest;
But let me see and hear,
From some dim mansion in the sky,
Thy bright ones, and their melody!"

The sun goes down with sudden gleam;
And beautiful as a lovely dream,
And silently as air,
The vision of a dark-eyed girl,
With long and raven hair,
Glides in as guardian spirits glide,
And lo! is kneeling by his side,
As if her sudden presence there
Were sent in answer to his prayer!
(O, say they not that angels tread
Around the good man's dying bed?)
His child, his sweet and sinless child!
And as he gazed on her,
He knew his God was reconciled,
And this the messenger,
As sure as God had hung on high
The promise-bow before his eye!
Earth's purest hope thus o'er him flung
To point his heavenward faith,
And life's most holy feeling strung
To sing him unto death!
And on his daughter's stainless breast
The dying Hebrew found his rest.

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin..... And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion, the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."—*New Testament.*

THE BIBLE CLASS NEEDED.

IMMEDIATELY following the execution of John Brown, the anti-slavery martyr of America, we were favoured with a batch of papers with the discussion in the Congress touching slavery. It was transparent that the anti-slavery party, whose sympathies were with Mr. Brown, had on their side not only a strong sense of justice and humane feeling, but they had the best of the debate and the better knowledge of Scripture at their hands, as well as the whole weight of moral character on their side of the house. The pro-slavery party not less claimed to be the true Christians of the States, and defended

"The white man selling the black for slaves,
And *quoting Scripture* in their defence,
And giving the money, the holy knaves,
To keep up pulpit eloquence."

It is not on slavery at this time, but on quoting Scripture, or *mis-quoting* rather, we would write a few words and show how much the Bible Class is needed. It would be a difficult problem to solve, "Whether the Bible is more needed in the Church or the World!" We nail the flag of the Bible to our masts, but it is scarcely the chart that seems to be guiding the Churches or the States of so-called Bible countries. We are hopeful things may get better. But now to the mis-quotation of its words as truly as there is a misunderstanding of its spirit. In the debates we have intimated, a Mr. Leman, member of Congress, and slavery advocate, reviled the members of the North, and begged, as they were fond of quoting Scripture, to call their attention to a passage they should consider before they attacked others—"*Man, know thyself.*" This was received with laughter, and proved that the gentleman knew as little about the words of the Bible as he did about its spirit, while he defended slavery. The Bible Class we find is really needed among senators, as the following mis-quotations, given by the *Bangor Whig*, from the same quarter, will show. Governor Wise, of Virginia, stated: "The Reubens have tried to sell me into Egypt for my dreaming." The Governor had reference, doubtless, to the story of Joseph being sold into Egypt—but, unfortunately, he

had got it all wrong. Reuben, it so happens, was the only one of the brothers who did *not* want to sell him. The Governor should join a Bible Class, and have his next reference on the right side. It was still more amusing, says the same paper, to read Mr. Hoge's speech, a few years ago, then the member for Illinois, quoting in debate the following lines, as coming from the Bible:

"While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

And Colonel Benton, talking of the Saviour casting out seven devils from a *certain man*, and another member earnestly opposing a measure before the House, and saying: "Mr. Speaker, I would no more vote for that measure than I would fall down and worship the golden calf that Abraham made." A brother member corrected him, saying: "Mr. Speaker, it was not *Abraham* that made the golden calf, it was *Nebuchadnezzar*." The last got rather nearer the mark, but both would have spoken better by graduating in a Bible Class. But what are we to think of the two members, at the close of the session, addressing a circular to their constituents, in which they said: "We hope the course we have pursued, and the votes we have given, will meet your approbation. We hope you will say to us, as Nathan said to David, 'Well done, good and faithful servants?'" We hope their constituents relieved them for a session from their duties, to attend the Bible Class. These quotations remind us, with a twofold power, of a good woman (the "weaker vessel," very likely, of the two), who had lost her husband by death, and receiving a visit of condolence from the minister, she entered pretty fully into a detail of her feelings of loneliness and grief, in her widowed condition. She said she found herself going back and forth, wandering about the house all day long, from garret to cellar, and she couldn't help thinking all day long of that very touching passage of Scripture—in the Book of Lamentations, she believed it was—which hit her case exactly: "*Goosey, Goosey Gander, where will you wander?*"

That "great men are not always wise," is still further exemplified in an anecdote of the distinguished English Judge, Lord Kenyon, who understood law better than the gospel, closed one of his charges to a jury, as follows: "Finally, gentlemen, I would call your attention to the example of the Roman Emperor Julian, who was so distinguished for every Christian virtue, that he was called Julian the *Apostle*." That editors should occasionally be at fault in the Scripture, is not, perhaps, very strange. We have room for only one example. In giving an obituary notice of a worthy man, it was remarked: "We may say of him, as the Holy Scriptures have so beautifully expressed it, 'An honest man is the noblest work of God;' and, in regard to the afflicted family, convey to them the consoling assurance from the same blessed source, that 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.'"

A few years ago at an election of a member for one of the Scotch Burghs, a wag, among questions that were being put, asked the candidate in open meeting if he would vote for the abolition of the Penteteuch. Not being so skilled in Biblical knowledge and names as the Scotchman, he inquired of his right hand man what the question really meant. "I think," said his friend, "it means, in Scotland, flogging in the army." He turned round and said, he would vote for the abolition of the pentetech. With one more anecdote we hope the whole will point the moral—"The Bible Class needed." A Love-feast, which is a meeting for the mutual expression of religious experience, was held some time ago in the North of England. One good brother had been greatly depressed in mind as he came to the meeting. He said, he was much afraid he would not have had one word to say, until that beautiful passage of Holy Writ struck his mind: "A faint heart never gained a fair lady's hand." Under the encouragement of these words he was enabled to address the meeting.

The Bible Class is worthy of attention. The frequent perusal of the Scriptures would not only correct the phraseology of mis-quotation, but would guide the spirit of the age, give to its physical toils, its mental activities, and all its movements, a correctness and moral grandeur that would well re-pay the daily study of the sacred page.

FOOLISH VIRGINS.

A SHORT SERMON.

In old times there were "*five foolish virgins.*" We are afraid that there are fully as many as that number at the present day. Some of them were born foolish; some of them were made foolish by the examples of their mothers; and some of them have made themselves foolish.

See that dashing *belle,* flounced from her heels to her arm-pits, and bedizzened with jewelry, pearls, gems, and precious stones. Her mother thinks her an angel; and she thinks herself an archangel; but she is a "foolish virgin"—that is all she is. He who made her, endowed her with an immortal soul, and pointed her to an eternal hereafter, said to her, "Let not your adorning be the outward adorning, the adorning of plaiting the hair, or of wearing gold, or of putting on apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." But all the *adorning* that this flimsy virgin has is *outward.* She has no solid education, no mental culture, and no noble and generous heart. She is not qualified for any usefulness in this world, unless as a frame on which to exhibit dry goods and the dress-maker's skill. And when she shall appear before her Maker, stripped of her "outward adorning," and without that precious "ornament of the heart," what a miserable figure that foolish virgin will cut. It is awful to think of the future of these mere butterflies of fashion. What is she good for? She knows not how to earn an honest livelihood. She could not make a loaf of bread, nor roast a turkey, nor bake a pudding. She could not knit a tidy, though she often knits her brow. She could not darn a stocking, though she could *darn* everything else. The most simple article of dress that adorns her useless body she could not make. "She toils not, neither does she spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like her." She has very little mind. She can only talk of theatres, balls, fashions, and beaux. Her moral nature is wholly uncultivated. She spends more time in examining fashion plates, than in examining her poor little heart—more time in reading love stories than in reading the blessed Bible. What on earth is she good for? She is a bill of useless expense to her father, and a barren fig tree in the great moral vineyard. The world would be better off if this foolish virgin no longer cumbered the ground. And one of these days the scythe of Time will cut her down, and the miserable flirt will go to her account.

Girls, young women, consider your ways. Have a high and worthy purpose. Make yourselves a blessing to this world. Abhor to be Flora M'Flimsey, as you would abhor to be any other fool. Be useful, be modest, be good, be "wise vigins," and when the great bridegroom shall come, you shall go in with Him to the marriage.

LENT.

Ash Wednesday.—Formerly Lent began on the First Sunday in Lent, and ended at Easter, containing in all forty-two days; and abstracting the six Sundays which are not fasts, there remained only thirty-six fasting days. To these Gregory added four days more, to render it equal to the time of our Saviour's fasting, causing it to begin on Ash Wednesday; and thus it has remained ever since. Herrick, in his "Noble Numbers," has left some sensible directions for "keeping the true Lent."

"Is this a Fast to keep
The Larder leane,—and cleane
From fat of veales and sheep?

"Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still,—to fill
The platter high with fish?

"Is it to faste an houre,
Or raged to go,—or show
A down-cast look and sowre?

"No; 'tis a Fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat,—and meat,
Unto the hungry soule.

"It is to fast from strife,
From old debate,—and hate;
To circumcise thy life.

"To show a heart grief-rent,
To starve thy sin,—not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent."

EXPLANATIONS OF SCRIPTURAL TEXTS ADVANCED TO SUSTAIN UNSCRIPTURAL DOCTRINES.

CALVINISTIC ELECTION.

It does not necessarily belong to our defence of Christian Unitarianism to give the meaning of those texts of Scripture adduced by Calvinists to support their views; that God has from all eternity chosen a portion of the human family to share the joys of heaven, and reprobated the other part to eternal woe; for there are many, in short the majority of Trinitarians have renounced the doctrine, and are still holding the peculiarities of the Trinitarian theology. Nevertheless we have taken in hand to give a brief explanation of a number of texts, which have been, and still are at times produced in defence of this most God-dishonouring doctrine. That God, who is good—who is merciful for ever—who is love—who is ready to forgive—who is the Father of the spirits of all flesh—who willeth not the death of a sinner—who is kind ever to the unthankful and evil; that he should from all eternity, as the creeds affirm, determine that by far the largest portion of the human race should die eternally—no, suffer indescribable misery for ever and for ever, without hope of heaven—having been doomed in the councils of God to this fate, appears to us to be one of the most blasphemous of all blasphemies. It was Wesley who truly said, "It makes God worse than the devil!" But there are portions of Scripture, it is said, which teach this; we say no, and now proceed to an explanation of those passages occasionally adduced for this purpose.

Gen. xxv. 23.—"And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger." This is all true, as masters and servants, stronger and weaker people there are according to the nature of society and things. There is nothing here about decreed election or reprobation. Wealth and superior physical strength are no evidences of God's greater kindness, nor do these things always contribute to greater human excellency. We have heard Calvinistic preachers cite such texts as these to fix their basis of argument.

Isaiah xliii. 21.—"This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." The Jewish people were framed for the special work of honouring God, and obeying his laws, and showing forth his praise before all nations. All this was not for their own good, but to be a blessing to all nations. The divine purpose, in their election to this, was not to be condemnation but salvation to the world.

Jer. xviii. 4.—"And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as the potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." It is often supposed that St. Paul has made a very different use of this similitude from that mentioned in the text by Jeremiah. See Rom. ix. 20. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonur?" We subjoin the comment of a very learned and pious man. "To this very sensible and pious man we will answer, *undoubtedly he has.* But would any potter make an exceedingly fair and good vessel on purpose to dash it to pieces? Surely no! And would, or could the God of infinite perfection and love make millions of immortal souls on purpose for eternal perdition, as the horrible decree of reprobation states? No! This is a lie against all the attributes of God. But does not the text state that he can, out of the same lump, the same mass of human nature, make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? Yes! But the text does not say what the horrible decree says, that he makes one part, and indeed the greater, for eternal perdition. But what then is the meaning of the text? Why evidently this: as out of the same mass of clay a potter may make a flagon for the table, and a certain utensil for the chamber, the one for a more honourable, the other for a less honourable use, though both equally necessary to the owner; so God, out of the same *flesh* and *blood*, may make the tiller of the field and the prophet of the Most High; the one is a more honourable, the other is a less honourable employ, yet both equally necessary in the world, and equally capable of bringing glory to God in there respective places. But if the vessel be marred in his hand, under his providential and gracious dealings he may reject it, as he did the *Jews*, and make another vessel, such as he is pleased with of the Gentiles; yet even these *marred vessels*, the reprobate Jews are not finally rejected; for all Israel shall be saved in (through) the Lord, *i.e.*, Jesus Christ. And should the Gentiles act as the Jews have done, they also shall be cut off, and God will call his Church by another name."—*Dr. A. Clarke.*

Matt. xiii. 15.—"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Here the fault is at once ascribed to the proper persons. They were not born or decreed to reject salvation: they have fastened their ears, closed their eyes, waxed obstinate and stupid, resisting the grace and truth of God, lest they should be converted and Christ should heal. It would be sheer hypocrisy to say they might be converted and healed, if they were preordained by heaven to have no such salvation.

Matt. xviii. 7.—"Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences

come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." *It must needs be that offences come.* Christ teaches no more than this, that in that state of society it was unavoidable but offences be committed. Good men say so still, when viewing the contaminating influences which now exist; but there is not one word about mankind going on sinning and suffering to all eternity. This is the point we must keep in view, and show these passages do not teach this awful doctrine.

Matt. xx. 16.—"So the last shall be first, and the first last, for many be called but few chosen." The *Gentiles*, who have been last in having a divine revelation, shall now accept of it and be before the *Jews* in religious knowledge and privileges. The first, the Jews, reject Christianity, and are to be behind the Gentiles. The Gentiles are God's people as well as the Jews, and manifest in their case the impartial goodness of God in choosing them to be his people through Christ. Many are called to be labourers in the vineyard of Christian truth and life, but few of those who hear this call choose to accept of it. There is not a word even about the utter rejection and eternal loss of those who are not chosen, or rather who do not choose to enter the vineyard. Less indeed is there about God determining from eternity to call many merely to tantalize them, and then take a few of all he had chosen and cast the others off. Many are called still, and very few of all who are invited to Christian life accept the offers and live the life of God's chosen ones. God's choosing of us is a matter which is in every ones own hands.

Mark iv. 12.—"That seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them." The disciples of Jesus Christ not fully understanding all the parables of their master, seek to be further instructed in these matters. Christ commends this spirit, and contrasts it with the great bulk of those who hear him. "These are parables, natural representations of great spiritual facts, and need a little explanation. I have spoken them to elicit inquiry, to find out the meaning of these things; they have answered their purpose, so far as you are concerned, but to them that are without, all these things are parables still; they do not understand them, they do not try;" and then Christ quotes the words of Isaiah (see Matt. xiii. 14): "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, 'By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.'" "Others, as well as you, have seen the miracles I have done, and they seem not to know the spiritual end or purposes for which they are performed; they have heard the parables and they do not apply the instruction." Can we suppose the guileless Saviour would spend his time purposeless to blind the people, or that the God of truth and sincerity could send a teacher to act thus? Christ might as well have saved his time and labour, and surely his seemingly unkind reflections on that people, if nothing he said could possibly do them any good, and it was intended that they should not profit from his instruction. We have given the meaning of this apparently obscure passage. His parables had the effect, on some, of alluring them to further inquiry. To the careless they remained parables; they would not give themselves the pains to inquire, and they were unworthy of plainer teaching. They were afraid they should understand and be converted; no uncommon thing with some people still.

Mark xiii. 20.—"And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days." Read the entire context of this passage in Matt., twenty-fourth chapter, or in Mark, and you will find it has reference to the days of tribulation coming on Jerusalem. It refers to nothing else. As some nations, by a single war, have been utterly ruined and dwindled away till they were left without a name, but their name in history, so it might have been with the Jews. But for the sake of those whom God hath chosen, the elect, which may refer to Christians to continue the work of evangelism, or the Jews to perpetuate the Jewish people as a distinct people, God will shorten the days of slaughter. For the sake of those whom I have determined shall be kept alive, I have shortened the days of tribulation. There is not a word about election to heaven, or reprobation to hell; it is a matter which touches the earth, and the Jewish people, and the Christian dispensation. We will often have occasion to show that many of the texts refer to the dispensation of human and moral affairs, where the words elect, etc., etc., are found.

Luke xviii. 7.—"And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them." These words form part of an address to the disciples to continue faithful in prayer, and firm amidst all the persecution to which they would be subject in the goodness and presence of God. The unjust judge, says Christ, vindicated the cause of the widow who was wronged by her adversary. You will have your numerous adversaries; appeal to God in your tribulation, and he will vindicate your cause, for you are his chosen or elect to carry the great principles of his kingdom abroad. If the unjust judge could from importunity do right, do not you despair, for God shall vindicate the cause of his chosen messengers when they cry to him, day and night, though he bear long, yet will he render a proper retribution to all the opposers of the gospel.

John vi. 44.—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." In the Scripture it is said, "In God we live and move, and have our being." So it is equally true, through divine influence, by God, are we drawn to all that is lovely, pure, just, and good. God draws us to Christ through the divinity of goodness embodied in Christ. It is not a true

Christian influence that drags or forces to the adoption of Christianity. Some are pushed, or drawn, or dragged to Christ. These are not true disciples. We only come truly to Christ when we are drawn by divine goodness. We understand the word rendered *draw*, in its pure, original sense, means *incited, allured.* Let us learn from such a text that it is not the fear of the devil, but the love of God that must draw us to Christ. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." *How true.* Whosoever will come may come, and take of the water of life freely.

St. John xii. 40.—"He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Our readers will be both instructed and pleased with the comment of *Dr. A. Clarke* on this text. "They could not believe, why? because they did not believe the report of the Prophets concerning Christ; therefore they credited not the miracles which he wrought, as a proof that he was the person foretold by the Prophets, and promised to the fathers. Having thus resisted the report of the Prophets, and the evidence of Christ's own miracles, God gave them up to the darkness and hardness of their own hearts, so that they continued to reject every overture of divine mercy; and God refused to heal their national wound, but, on the contrary, commissioned the Romans against them, so that their political existence was totally destroyed. This verse is taken from Isaiah vi. 9, and perhaps refers more to the judgments that should fall upon them as a nation, which God was determined should not be averted, than it does to their eternal state. To suppose that the text meant that God was unwilling that they should turn unto him, lest he should be obliged to save them, is an unsupportable blasphemy. Should I say that *they could not* believe, means *they would* not believe, I should perhaps offend a generation of his children; and yet I am pretty certain the words should be so understood. However, that I may put myself under cover from all suspicion of perverting the meaning of a text which seems to some to be spoken in favour of that awful doctrine of unconditional reprobation, the very father of this doctrine shall interpret this text for me. Thus then saith ST. AUGUSTINE: 'If I be asked why they *could not* believe? I immediately answer, because they *would not.* And God having foreseen their *bad will*, foretold it by the prophet.'"

St. John xiv. 6.—"No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is the only true shepherd of the human race to bring all to God. We know a passage or two of this nature is quoted, to cut off all who do not bear the Christian name, but we have a larger system, which takes in the whole term of Scripture, and says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus *every* knee should bow; of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ was Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things on earth or things in heaven." "That in the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him."

Acts iv. 12.—"Neither is their salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." This is also one of those passages quoted to limit salvation to a few who have taken upon them the name and discipleship of Christ. We believe the salvation spoken of in this text refers to the power of healing. Should it be still affirmed it has reference to human redemption from sin, we beg our readers to look over the preceding text, on which we have just commented, and then see how many are to be excluded from divine grace.

Acts xiii. 46.—"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It is necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." It will be observed, at once, this passage speaks of some men judging themselves (not God decreeing) unworthy of everlasting life. We think the phrase is a strong irony on those who would not accept the word of truth.

Acts xiii. 48.—"And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." In the "improved version" the latter clause is, "as many as were *disposed* to eternal life believed." The word rendered in the text *ordained* has caused it to be misunderstood. Some persons, when they heard the gospel, were opposed to it, they ridiculed a resurrection. Those disposed, with open mind, to believe in a resurrection, received the gospel and joined the Church. A large number of the ablest biblical scholars admit the meaning of the original word to be, not ordained, but disposed to eternal life. Another import of the words is, "As many of the Gentiles believed as were inwardly disposed to receive the doctrine of everlasting life."

Rom. ix. 13; Mal. i. 2.—"I have loved you, saith the Lord, yet we say wherein hast thou loved us. Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob and hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons." The word hated in this text conveys a very improper idea of its meaning to the English reader. It does not mean hate, but *less love.* In Genesis, twenty-ninth chapter 30, 31, it is said that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah; and goes on to state "that

the Lord saw that Leah was hated," *i.e.*, was loved less. For Jacob did not hate Leah. So Christ is made to say, "If a man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brother, and sister, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Now we know that *love*, not *hate*, is the feature of Christian discipleship. The word hate in the passage means, if a man love them not less than me, *i.e.*, than the doctrines of virtue and piety, which I preach, he is not worthy to be my disciple. We have shown the word *hate* means loved less, and the loving of Esau less than Jacob is the same thing as is done in every family, without any partiality or dislike. One child receives what is regarded by the world an inferior lot or social position. Esau receives by the ordination of God a very inferior earthly possession to Jacob, that is subject to being laid waste. In truth, we find that these possessions did not concern the two brothers so much as their posterity. We are not all equal now in social position, but who infers from this partiality of God. There is not a single word in the text about the *eternal state* of either Jacob or Esau.

ARE WE SEMI-HEATHENS?

THE Venerable Archdeacon Downall, at a Church Rate meeting, a week or two ago, said: "Supposing in any of the parishes the majority of the subscribers should be Unitarians, the churches would then pass into the hands of Semi-heathens, of those who deny the Lord who bought them." On which the Rev. D. Griffith sent him the following just and gentle reproof.

Unitarians have been long accustomed to bear no small amount of vituperative language from those who profess themselves to be the disciples of Him who hath said, "Judge not that ye be not judged;" but it is not often that we have been represented, even by our bitterest opponents, under the epithet which you have thought fit to apply to us—that of "semi-heathens."

Believing Unitarianism to be the doctrine of God's most Holy Word, and the teaching of our blessed Redeemer, I feel called upon to ask you for some explanation of the process of reasoning, by which you feel yourself justified in coming to such a conclusion with regard to our holy faith.

You must be aware that the greatest characteristic of heathenism is its *poly*theism, whilst one of the fundamental principles of Unitarianism is its *mono*theism; if the analogy which you have alleged as existing between Unitarianism and heathenism consists at all in the relative proportions of their *theistic* elements, do you not suppose that the *tri*theism of the Athanasian creed presents a nearer approximation towards semi-heathenism than the pure, simple, invisible *mono*theism of the Unitarian Church? Or perhaps, speaking *ex Cathedra*, you deemed it the easier course sublimely to ignore all reasoning and unscrupulously to fix the stigma of "semi-heathenism" upon the great and distinguished names of Newton, Locke, Milton, Channing,—names distinguished no less for their *piety*, than for the lustre which they have shed on the history of science, philosophy, and literature.

But you will kindly permit me further to ask—on what authority do you found the assertion that "Unitarians deny the Lord who bought them?" Had you taken the trouble to ascertain the *real* sentiments of a body of Christians, on whom you have ventured to pronounce such harsh judgment, you would have learnt that we rejoice to receive Christ as the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved;" as the "express image" of the invisible God, and "the brightness of His glory;" as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;" that we believe, that in all our wanderings, in all our sins, we ever have "an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" and that "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Holding these views as most dear and infinitely precious, we cannot but regard such a statement as that which emanated from your lips either as a most uncalled-for manifestation of the *odium theologicum*, or as the result of deplorable ignorance, or as an unmanly attempt to create a feeling in favour of the Church Rate question, by an appeal to the supposed prejudices of your hearers; I say *supposed*, for the event proved that the hearts of some of them, at least, beat with a larger charity than your own.

It is well for the Church of England—for its ecclesiastical existence, as well as for the higher spiritual interests of its members, that there is, within its pale, a noble and an increasing band of ministers whose sympathies are more Catholic than those by which your Tavistock address would seem to have been dictated.

I beg to submit to your serious and candid perusal a few extracts from the writings of one of the noblest of these—one alas! whose eloquent lips have been sealed in the silence of death, but whose earnest words will not cease to influence the hearts of men, as long, I believe, as the English language will continue to be a living speech. "It is possible that men, externally Trinitarians, may differ from each other, though using the same words, as greatly as a Unitarian differs from a Trinitarian. There may be found in the same church and in the same congregation, men holding all possible shades of opinion, though agreeing externally and in words. I speak within the limit of my own experience when I say that persons have been known and heard to express the language of bitter condemnation respecting Unitarianism, who, when examined and calmly required to draw out verbally the meaning of their own conceptions, have been proved to be holding all the time—unconsciously—the very doctrine of Sabellianism. And this doctrine is condemned by the church as distinctly as that of Unitarianism. Therefore let us learn from all this a large and Catholic charity." And again: "In the sight of God, and with respect to a man's eternal destinies hereafter, it would surely be better for him earnestly, honestly, truly, to hold the doctrines of Unitarianism, than in a cowardly or indifferent spirit, or influenced by authority, or from considerations of interest, or for the sake of lucre, to hold the doctrines of Trinitarianism."

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

THE "WELSH INQUIRER."—Our Unitarian friends in Wales are doing their best to have a denominational periodical among them in the Welsh language. In the following way we can aid them: any of the readers of the *Christian Freeman*, who receive a parcel from us, can have—in the same parcel—a *Welsh Inquirer*, post free, at 1½*d.* per month.

WOMAN'S MISSION.—As the vine which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it in sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling around it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs, so it is beautifully ordered by Providence that woman, who is the mere dependent and ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity—winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head, and binding up the broken heart.

HORRIBLE THOUGH TRUE.—How horrible it must be to see anybody one cared for drunk; the honest eyes dull and meaningless; the wise lips jabbering foolishness; the whole face and figure, instead of being what one likes to look at, growing ugly, irrational, disgusting. Yet some women have to bear it, have to speak kindly to their husbands, hide their brutishness, and keep them from making worse fools of themselves than they can help. I think if I were married, and I saw my husband the least overcome by wine, not "drunk" may be, but just excited, silly, otherwise than his natural self, it would nearly drive me wild. Less on my account than his. To see him sink—not for a great crime, but a contemptible, cowardly-bit of sensualism—from the height where my love had placed him; to have to take care of him, to pity him—ay, and I might pity him—but I think the full glory and passion of my love would die out, then and there, for ever.

SPEAKING OUT IN DREAMS.—An amusing incident occurred in the cars of the Virginia and Tennessee road, which must be preserved in print. It is too good to be lost. As the train entered the big tunnel, near that place, in accordance with the usual custom, a lamp was lit. A servant girl, accompanying her mistress, had sunk into a profound slumber; but just as the lamp was lit she awoke, and, half asleep, imagined herself in the infernal regions. Frantic with fright, she implored her Maker to have mercy on her, remarking, at the same time, "the devil has got me at last." Her mistress, sitting on the seat in front of the terrified negro, was deeply mortified, and called upon her, "Mollie, don't make such a noise; it is I, be not afraid." The poor African immediately exclaimed, "Oh, missus, dat you; jest what I spected; I always thought if I ebber got to de bad place I would see you dar." These remarks were uttered with such vehemence that not a word was lost, and the whole coach became convulsed with laughter.

UNIVERSALISM "experimentally proven to be disastrous to good morals"—is it? Do our prisons prove it? Look at the recent report of the Toronto prison in Canada, where we find seven hundred and sixty-five Episcopalians, one hundred and fifty-two Presbyterians, sixty-four Methodists, and not a single Universalist or Unitarian found in that prison; and yet Mr. Knox gravely affirms that Universalism has been "experimentally proven to be disastrous to good morals!"—*Chicago Paper.*

FAULT FINDING.—Having in my youth notions of severe piety, says a celebrated Persian writer, I used to rise in the night, to watch, pray and read the Koran. One night as I was engaged in these exercises, my father, a man of practical virtue, awoke while I was reading. "Behold," said I to him, "thy other children are lost in irreligious slumber, while I alone awake to praise God." "Son of my soul," said he, "it is better to sleep, than wake to mark the faults of thy brethren."

THE TRINITY.—"Little girls," said Miss Bell, to her Sabbath-school class, "what do you understand by the Trinity?" "Three persons in one God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," answered the children. "Do you understand *how* there can be three persons in one God, and all equal?" asked Miss Bell. "No, Ma'am: do you think any one does?" "I suppose *you* do, ma'am?" said Sophie Johnson. "No," said Miss Bell, "I do not understand *how* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one; and perhaps I never shall if I get to heaven, and after I have been there 'ten thousand years.' This may be one of the mysteries into which the angels desire to look, and are not able. But do we not constantly believe in a great many things we do not understand? You don't understand *how* the flowers grow; or why one kind of seed always produces one kind of flower. You know the sun and the rain make them grow, but *how* you cannot tell."—The above is from a Trinitarian newspaper. But we, as Unitarians, do not reject the Trinity because it is a *mystery*, because we do not know the *how*, but because it is an absurdity in itself, a flat contradiction in terms, an irreconcilable incongruity. The three-fold will or personality of God, and the two-fold will or personality of Christ, when combined into one being, are not of the class of things hidden, or secret, or mysterious, but they are of the class of things, in a certain sense, comprehensible and intelligible, and as such they are pronounced at once by the mind to be things not to be supposed or allowed any more than that one being can have two bodies or two wills. The Trinity is a palpable absurdity, a noon-day contradiction, and not one to be classed with mysteries at all. It is as irrational as it is unscriptural.

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